

California CASA Programs

2007 Report



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
OF THE COURTS
CENTER FOR FAMILIES, CHILDREN
& THE COURTS

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California CASA Programs 2007 Report

A Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) is a trained volunteer who is appointed by a judge, commissioner, referee, or other bench officer to provide one-on-one advocacy for a child who is under the jurisdiction of the courts owing to abuse, neglect, or abandonment. These volunteers spend time with children, ensure that court-ordered services are provided, attend court hearings for children to which they are assigned, and provide child-focused recommendations to the court based on the best interest of the children they serve.

CASA programs were first implemented in 1977 in Washington State; the following year the first CASA program in California began providing services to children. In 1988, legislation amended California's Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 100 et seq., to require the Judicial Council to establish guidelines encouraging the development of local CASA programs. As a result, the council adopted rule 5.655 of the California Rules of Court, which contains mandated requirements that CASA programs must follow. The council works closely with the California CASA Association to ensure that programs are in compliance with both rule 5.655 and the National CASA Association standards.

California CASA programs vary by size, number of children served, and services offered. There are 40 local CASA programs providing services in 43 of California's 58 counties, as well as 1 tribal CASA program.¹

Program Highlights

The findings reported here are from the California respondents to the 2007 Local Program Survey administered by the National CASA Association (NCASAA). Where relevant, the results of a recent assessment of CASA in California (*CASA and the Courts Assessment*) are also included.²

- A total of **100 percent** of the local programs responded to the survey ($n = 40$).
- About **5,360 volunteers** served children in 2007, compared to 5,100 volunteers in 2006.
- Approximately **8,100 children** were served by CASA volunteers in 2007; a median of 140 children were served per program.
- The *CASA and the Courts Assessment* (2008) found that about **6 percent** of children in the California dependency system were served by CASA volunteers in December 2007.³

¹ In 2004, the Karuk Tribal CASA program was established in Northern California, the first tribal CASA program in the state; this report does not include the Karuk program's data.

² Administrative Office of the Courts, Center for Families, Children & the Courts (2008), *Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) and the Courts: An Assessment*.

³ The *CASA and the Courts Assessment* (2008) data was collected from a point-in-time survey.

- In 2007, the median cost per child was about **\$2,500**, an increase of more than 11 percent from 2006.⁴
- Programs statewide reported about **450,800 donated hours** in service to California children, an average of 84 hours per volunteer annually.⁵ Donated volunteer hours represent a monetary value of about **\$9,904,000**.⁶
- In 2007, statewide actual total program revenue was about **\$18,924,000**; approximately 3 percent more than last year.⁷

Program Resources

Program Revenue

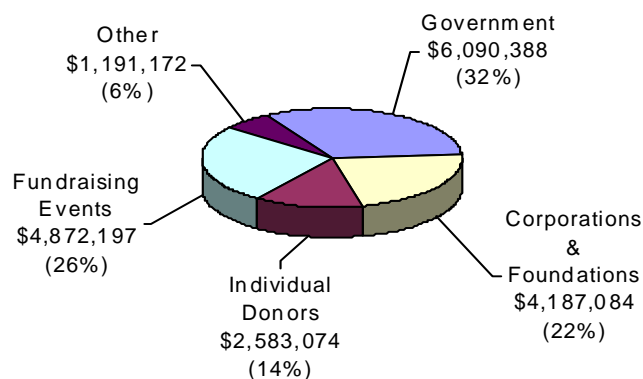
In 2007, a total of 58 percent ($n = 23$) of responding programs reported revenue increases from 2006, 12 percent ($n = 5$) reported constant revenue, and 30 percent ($n = 12$) reported decreased revenue. Statewide, the median total revenue was \$264,313, slightly higher than in 2006 (\$252,928).⁸ The total revenue for all programs statewide (\$18,923,915) was about 3 percent higher than last year.

Figure 1 details the major revenue sources in 2007; the total amount contributed by these major sources (\$17,732,743) represents about 94 percent of total program funding, and “other” sources account for the rest.

Public Funding Sources

In general, the median public funding levels remained steady in 2007. Median funding levels received from the state (including Judicial Council funding) and local courts both increased slightly by 6 percent, while median funding from county sources increased more significantly by 10 percent. Meanwhile, the median funding level from federal sources decreased slightly (2 percent) while median funding levels received from cities decreased by 25 percent. Public funding sources accounted for about 32 percent of the total statewide funding in 2007.

Figure 1. Sources of revenue in 2007



⁴ Cost per child is calculated by dividing the total budgeted expenses by the total number of children served.

⁵ The number of volunteer hours should be viewed cautiously as there is no standardized method for collecting such data.

⁶ Total number of hours multiplied by \$21.97 (Independent Sector's California 2006 rate for the value of a volunteer hour).

⁷ The 2007 survey asked programs to no longer include “in-kind” sources in the total revenue. Comparison figures for previous years have been adjusted accordingly.

⁸ The information reported in the NCASAA survey was for calendar year 2007, except for the fiscal data, for which the programs were asked to report the most recent fiscal year.

Private Funding Sources

In 2007, foundation grants, corporate contributions, individual donors, and fundraising events accounted for 62 percent of the total statewide funding for CASA programs. However, programs' median funding levels from private funding sources generally decreased sharply in 2007—foundation funding decreased 25 percent, corporate funding decreased 39 percent, and the funding amount from individual donors decreased 43 percent.

Still, fundraising events remained an exceptionally strong source of revenue for CASA. The median revenue level generated from fundraising events increased by almost 50 percent in 2007, with 80 percent of programs reporting revenue from these events. In addition to creating revenue, fundraising events boost the public visibility of CASA, volunteers, and the needs of foster children and thus continue to be an important component of CASA programs.

Many CASA programs (68 percent) also reported receiving in-kind donations in 2007. Examples of these donations include book-keeping services, furniture, office supplies, and office space donated by the local court or county. While these donations do not produce program revenue, they are an important resource for programs and they increased by 75 percent in 2007.

Cost Per Child

The cost to provide CASAs to a foster child or teen increased in 2007 by more than 11 percent. In 2007, the median cost per child was \$2,522 (compared to \$2,255 in 2006.)

Table 1. Detail of funding sources for 2007

Funding source	No. of receiving programs (n=40)	Median funding	Total aggregate funding	Percent of total statewide funding
Public				
Court	13	\$53,000	\$801,200	4%
State*	40	\$53,500	\$2,625,813	14%
County	20	\$46,250	\$1,385,829	7%
City	7	\$7,500	\$134,806	<1%
Federal **	22	\$24,583	\$1,142,740	6%
Private				
Foundation grants	30	\$55,988	\$3,024,730	16%
Corporate contributions	24	\$16,850	\$1,162,354	6%
Individual donors	29	\$30,000	\$2,583,074	14%
United Way	14	\$10,581	\$275,609	2%
Community service	19	\$7,862	\$182,612	1%
Kappa Alpha Theta	7	\$3,000	\$32,754	<1%
Church donations	7	\$1,000	\$11,539	<1%
Fundraising				
Fundraising events	32	\$91,616	\$4,872,197	26%
Product sales	8	\$3,405	\$84,201	<1%
Other sources***	23	\$7,227	\$604,457	3%
Statewide revenue		\$264,313	\$18,923,915	
In-Kind Donations	27	\$27,108	\$1,754,244	N/A

* All responding programs received state funding from the Judicial Council during 2007. This grant accounts for 11 percent of the total funding for CASA in California.

** Federal sources include the National CASA Association, Community development block grants (CDBG), and title IV-E.

*** Other sources include membership dues, Interest on lawyers trust accounts funding (IOLTA), and various other sources.

CASA Staff

Number of Positions

During 2007 CASA programs reported a median of 4 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions and an FTE range of 0.75 to 32.5 positions total. The average program was staffed by a full-time executive director and at least one full-time volunteer coordinator. The range of volunteer coordinators per program was 0.2 to 15.7 FTE positions. Most programs (58 percent) reported retaining the same number of staff positions in 2007, while 32 percent added staff capacity and 10 percent of programs lost staff positions.

Executive Director Position

The median executive director's salary in 2007, when adjusted for full-time equivalent status, was \$63,877 annually. Although this represents about a 6.5 percent increase from 2006, the growth in executive director salaries primarily took place in the Southern Region, where the median salary increased about 12 percent.⁹ The median salary level in the Bay Area/Northern Coastal Region remained steady while the median salary level in the Northern/Central Region decreased by more than 8 percent. Eighty-two percent of responding programs provided benefits to the executive director and 18 percent did not.

Table 2. Annual 2007 executive director median salaries (FTE) and benefits, statewide and by region

Executive Director Salary and Benefits	Bay Area/ Northern Coastal (n = 14)	Northern/ Central (n = 16)	Southern (n = 10)	All programs (n = 40)
Median salary	\$68,686	\$54,000	\$67,143	\$63,877
Health	11	11	8	30
Dental	10	8	3	21
Retirement	7	5	3	15
Other	3	5	1	9
None	1	5	1	7

Volunteer Coordinator Position

In 2007, 95 percent of programs had a volunteer coordinator position. Statewide, the median volunteer coordinator's FTE salary increased slightly by 5 percent to \$37,234 in 2007. Median salary levels across all regions remained fairly constant, with an increase seen primarily in the Bay Area/Northern Coastal region (4 percent.) During 2007, the number of programs offering health and dental benefits to volunteer coordinators also remained constant. However, 18 percent of programs still did not provide any type of benefit package to volunteer coordinators. Table 3 provides details of volunteer coordinator salaries and benefits statewide and by region.

⁹ Program regions are aligned with the California Administrative Office of the Courts' designated regions (see Appendix 2).

Table 3. Annual 2007 volunteer coordinator median salaries (FTE) and benefits, statewide and by region

Volunteer Coordinator Salary and Benefits	Bay Area/ Northern Coastal (n = 14)	Northern/ Central (n = 14)*	Southern (n = 10)	All programs (n = 38)
Median salary	\$40,500	\$33,696	\$35,000	\$37,234
Health	11	10	8	29
Dental	10	7	3	20
Retirement	6	3	2	11
Other	4	5	1	10
None	1	4	2	7

*Two of the 16 Northern/Central counties did not have a volunteer coordinator position at the time of this survey.

CASA Volunteers

Number of Volunteers

The number of CASA advocates in California increased by 5 percent in 2007, with about 5,360 volunteers serving approximately 8,100 children. CASA programs reported an overall median of 111 volunteers actively serving children. Regionally, a median of 32 volunteers served in Northern/Central programs, 119 volunteers served in Bay Area/Northern Coastal programs, and 170 volunteers served in Southern programs. Many of the programs in the Northern/Central Region are located in small rural counties with low populations and, therefore, lower dependency populations than in the other two regions. Conversely, Southern California also accounts for more than half the state's dependency population.

More than 450,770 hours were donated by volunteers to serve children in 2007, a 15 percent decrease from 2006. Each volunteer contributed an average of 84 hours annually.

In 2007, California programs trained 1,793 new volunteers, who were sworn in by California courts. The number of new volunteers remained constant from the previous year (1,789).

In 2007, programs were asked for the first time to report the level of staff support available for volunteers in the form of ratios. The staff to volunteer ratio ranged from 5 to 50, with the median being 27 volunteers per staff member.

Demographics

CASA volunteers continued to be primarily women (81 percent), non-Hispanic white (68 percent¹⁰), and over 40 years old (70 percent.) For more details on the demographics of volunteers in comparison to the children they serve, see table 5 on page 7. In addition, the *CASA and the Courts Assessment* (2008) reported that most California volunteers (57 percent) were employed, with 40 percent working full time.

¹⁰ The *CASA and the Courts Assessment* (2008), using a different method, found 86 percent of CASA volunteers to be non-Hispanic white.

Children Served

Number Served

Approximately 8,100 children were served by volunteers throughout 2007. This represents a 5 percent increase in the total number of children served by volunteers over 2006 (7,700). The *CASA and the Courts Assessment*, which collected point-in-time data, found that about 5,000 dependent children were being served in December 2007, about 6 percent of the foster care children in California at the time.

Although the total number of children served by CASA statewide increased in 2007, the median number of children served actually decreased by 8 percent to a median of 140 children. One-fourth of programs served fewer than 65 children, while one-fourth served more than 260 children. Meanwhile, CASA programs served 3,404 new children in 2007, an increase of 4 percent over 2006. However, even though the number of children assigned a CASA grew in 2007, CASA continued to serve less than 10 percent of the state's child welfare system.

CASA programs in California typically follow a "one child, one advocate" program model. However, volunteers may choose to serve more than one child at a time or to serve a sibling group. Consequently, the median number of children served by one volunteer in 2007 was 1.5.

Case Types Served

In addition to child abuse and neglect cases, 17 programs served children in other types of cases: 2 programs served children in divorce custody cases and 14 programs served delinquency cases. Many CASA advocates follow their assigned child if the case is transferred from dependency court to delinquency court. Some courts in California have begun to adopt dual-status protocols to allow the court to determine a child as both a dependent and a ward of the court.¹¹ One CASA program reported serving a dual-status case in 2007.

Outcomes at Case Closure

CASA programs reported closing 2,612 cases in 2007, 3 percent more than in the previous year. Table 4 describes the most common outcomes for children at court case closure or CASA program case closure in 2007. More than half (55 percent) of closed cases resulted in reunification, adoption, or guardianship.

Table 4. Most common outcomes at case closure in 2007 (n=2,612)

Outcome at case closure	Percent of children whose cases closed
Reunification	32%
Adoption	16%
Child aged out of system/Emancipation	13%
Guardianship	7%
Long Term Foster Care	6%
Transferred out of County or State	3%
Removed from Docket	3%
Delinquency	2%
Other	14%
Missing data	4%

¹¹ For more detailed discussion on dual-status protocols in California see Administrative Office of the Courts, Center for Families, Children & the Courts (2007), *Dual-Status Children: Protocols for Implementing Assembly Bill 129 – A report to the California Legislature*. Available at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/programs/description/AB129-DualStatus.htm

Children's Demographics

In 2007, as reported by the survey, almost 60 percent of children served by volunteers were children of color, predominantly Hispanic (33 percent) and African American (15 percent). The percentage of African American and Hispanic children served was fairly stable compared to the previous year. As seen in table 5, racial/ethnic disparities between staff, volunteers, and children continue—particularly for African American and Hispanic children.

Available point-in-time child welfare data for California as of January 1, 2008, provides a rough comparison to the CASA children served (see table 5).¹² This data also suggests that the race/ethnicity of CASA children served in 2007 was not entirely reflective of the general child welfare population in that African-American and Hispanic children, in particular, were underrepresented and white (non-Hispanic) children were overrepresented.

At the same time, the data reported by programs in the National CASA *Annual Survey* also included more than 1,300 children (16 percent) who could not be compared with state child welfare data because of their vague categorization as either “Multiracial,” “Other,” or “Unknown.” Meanwhile, the *CASA and the Courts Assessment* executed a detailed multicategorical methodology that more clearly identified the children served. The study found that when multiracial African American children are included with children identified solely as African American, the disparity of CASA service for African American children lessened significantly from 8 percentage points to a disparity of only 3 percentage points. This method, however, influenced disparity only among African American children. The study continued to find that Hispanic children were underserved by CASA and white (non-Hispanic) children continued to be overrepresented at the same rate as the National CASA survey data.

Table 6. Age of children served in 2007 (n=8624)

Age	Percent of Children Served
Birth–5 years	22%
6–11 years	29%
12–17 years	45%
18+ years	3%
Unknown	1%

Table 5. Percentage of all staff, volunteers, children served, and California children in foster care in each gender and racial/ethnic group in 2007.¹² Figures include about 500 children served by CASA program staff.

Demographics	Staff	Volunteers	Children served	Children in foster care
Gender				
Female	87%	81%	52%	50%
Male	13%	19%	48%	50%
Race/Ethnicity				
African American	7%	5%	15%	27%
Asian/Pacific Islander	5%	4%	2%	2%
White (non-Hispanic)	64%	68%	32%	24%
Hispanic	19%	10%	33%	45%
Native American	2%	1%	2%	2%
Multiracial	1%	3%	7%	N/A
Other	2%	2%	2%	N/A
Unknown	0%	7%	7%	below 1%
Statewide Totals	327	5,361	8,624	72,147

The gender (table 5) and age (table 6) of CASA children served in 2007 remained constant from the previous year and was roughly comparable to the state's child welfare population.

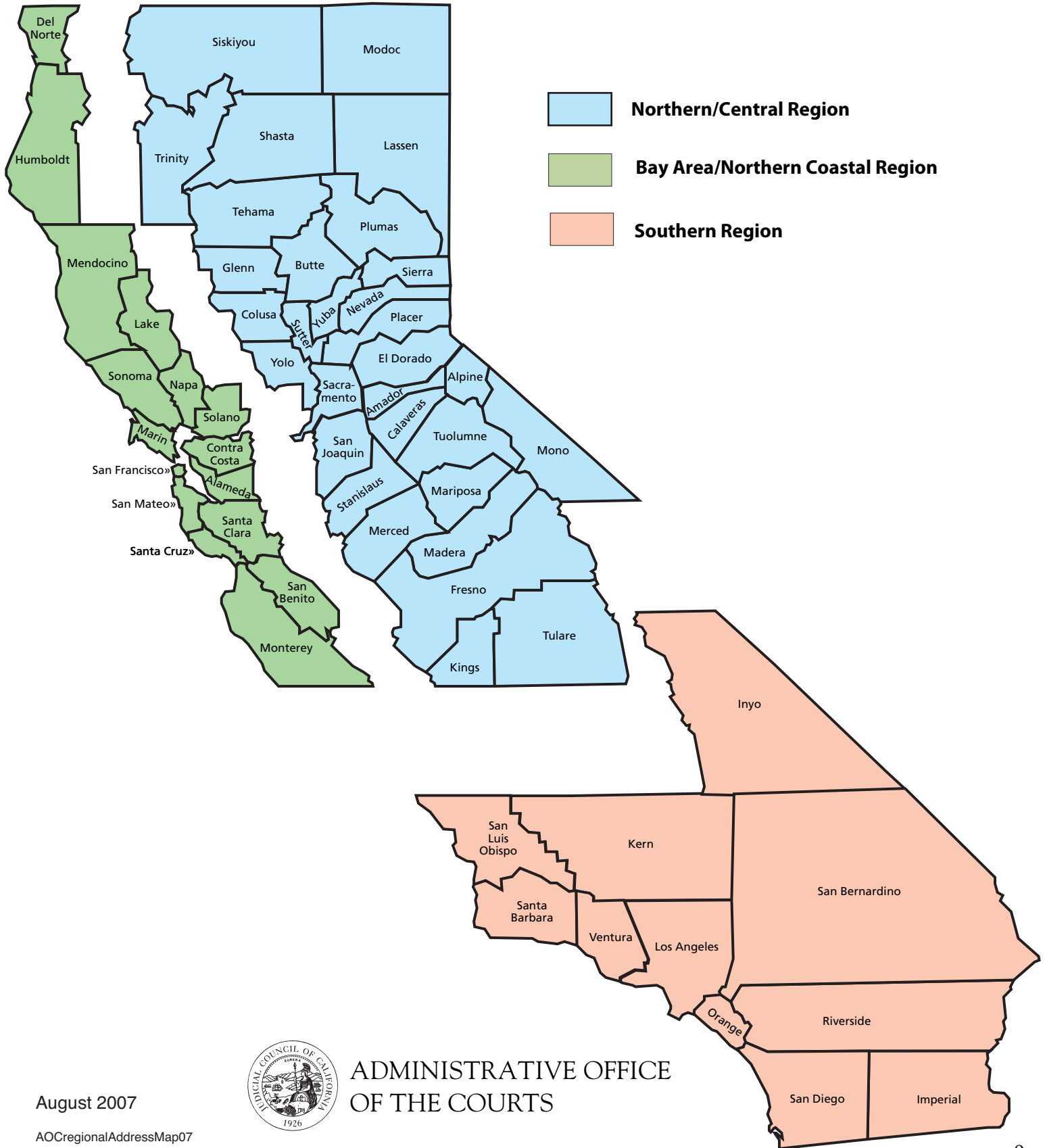
¹² Needell, B., et al. (2008), *Child Welfare Services Reports for California*. Accessed September 10, 2008, at http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare.

Appendix 1

Program respondents included in data set in 2007 (*n* = 40)

County	Program Name
Alameda	Alameda County CASA Program
Amador	Amador-Tuolumne Community Actions Agency/Amador County CASA Program
Butte/Glenn	CASA of Butte County
Contra Costa	CASA of Contra Costa County
Del Norte	CASA of Del Norte
El Dorado	CASA of El Dorado County
Fresno/Madera	CASA of Fresno and Madera Counties
Humboldt	CASA of Humboldt
Imperial	CASA of Imperial County
Kern	CASA of Kern County
Lassen	Lassen Family Services/Lassen County CASA Program
Los Angeles	CASA of Los Angeles
Marin	Marin Advocates/Marin CASA Program
Mariposa	CASA of Mariposa County
Mendocino	CASA of Mendocino County
Modoc	T.E.A.C.H./Modoc CASA Program
Monterey/San Benito	CASA of Monterey County
Napa	CASA of Napa County
Nevada	Child Advocates of Nevada County
Orange	CASA of Orange County, Inc.
Placer	Child Advocates of Placer County
Plumas	Plumas Crisis Intervention and Resource Center/Plumas County CASA
Riverside	CASA for Riverside County, Inc.
Sacramento	Sacramento CASA Program, Inc.
San Bernardino	Child Advocates of San Bernardino County
San Diego	Voices for Children, Inc./San Diego CASA
San Francisco	San Francisco CASA Program
San Joaquin	San Joaquin CASA Program
San Luis Obispo	Voices for Children, Inc./CASA of San Luis Obispo County
San Mateo	Advocates for Children/San Mateo County CASA Program
Santa Barbara	CASA of Santa Barbara County
Santa Clara	Child Advocates of Silicon Valley
Santa Cruz	CASA of Santa Cruz County
Siskiyou	CASA of Siskiyou County
Solano	Solano County CASA
Sonoma	CASA of Sonoma County
Stanislaus	CASA of Stanislaus County
Tulare	CASA of Tulare County
Ventura	Interface/CASA of Ventura County
Yolo	Yolo County CASA

Administrative Office of the Courts Regional Map



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OF THE COURTS

August 2007

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Methodology

This report summarizes data submitted by all of California's 40 local CASA programs as part of the National CASA Association's 2007 annual survey; the data discussed represents all 40 programs that responded to the survey, unless otherwise noted. All tables and charts note the number of respondents ($n = xx$) for the data represented. The data in this report may vary from the data submitted to National CASA because of follow-up efforts regarding erroneous or missing data; in these instances, data errors were largely corrected and the corrected data is reflected in this report.

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